DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 160 TM 012 277

TITLE	Writing Objectives and Measurement Specifications, 1986-1990, Grade 5. Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS).
INSTITUTION	Texas Education Agency, Austin. Div. of Educational Assessment.
REPORT NO	GE6-725-06
PUB DATE	86
NOTE	33p.; For related documents, see TM 012 278, and TM 012 283-284.
AVAILABLE FROM	Publications Distribution Office, Texas Education Agency, 1701 North Congress Ave., Austin, TX 78701.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Behavioral Objectives; Capitalization (Alphabetic); *Educational Objectives; Elementary School Students; English; *Grade 5; Grammar; Intermediate Grades; *Minimum Competency Testing; Punctuation; Sentence Structure; Spelling; State Programs; Story Telling; Test Construction; *Testing Programs; Writing (Composition); *Writing Evaluation; Writing Instruction; Writing Skills
IDENTIFIERS	Proofreading; *Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

ABSTRACT

The writing learning objectives for fifth graders contained in this volume are congruent with the Texas "State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum." These objectives and the measurement specifications are provided for use by teachers and other educators responsible for student instruction and for test development specialists involved with the preparation of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) tests. Beginning with the 1985-86 school year, the TEAMS tests were based upon the objectives in this publication. Skill areas covered by the objectives include: (1) show knowledge of standard capitalization; (2) show knowledge of standard punctuation; (3) recognize correct spelling of commonly used words; (4) show knowledge of correct English usage; (5) show ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons; (6) show ability to proofread a written communication; (7) write a composition to describe an object or picture; (8) write a composition to tell how to do something; (9) write a narrative on a specific topic; (10) write a composition in which two or more ideas/objects/places are classified and described; and (11) write a composition in which a choice is made and reasons given in order to convince a specific audience. Sample test items are provided for each of the skill areas. (TJH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED298160

Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

Writing Objectives and Measurement Specifications 1986-1990 Grade 5

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

LINDA KEMP

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Texas Education Agency
Division of Student Assessment
1986

TM 012 277

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills

Writing Objectives and Measurement Specifications 1986-1990 Grade 5

After initial distribution to authorized institutions, additional copies will be available from the Publications Distribution Office, Texas Education Agency, 1701 North Congress Avenue, Austin, Texas 78701. However, with the increasing demand for educational material, the supply at times may be exhausted.

Division of Student Assessment
Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas

FOREWORD

The learning objectives contained in this volume are congruent with the State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum which outlines the rules and procedures for implementation of Section 21.101 of the Texas Education Code. These objectives and the measurement specifications are provided for use by teachers and other educators responsible for pupil instruction and for test development specialists involved with the preparation of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) tests. Beginning with the 1985-86 school year, the TEAMS tests were based upon the objectives in this publication.

W. N. Kirby
Commissioner of Education

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

(State Board for Vocational Education)

JON BRUMLEY, Fort Worth
Chairman of the State Board of Education
District 11

REBECCA CANNING, Waco
Vice Chairman of the State Board of Education
District 9

EMMETT J. CONRAD, Dallas
Secretary of the State Board of Education
District 13

Board Members

VOLLY C. BASTINE, JR., Houston
District 4

MARY HELEN BERLANGA, Corpus Christi
District 2

CAROLYN HONEA CRAWFORD, Beaumont
District 7

CHARLES W. DUNCAN, JR., Houston
District 6

PAUL C. DUNN, Levelland
District 15

MARIA ELENA A. FLOOD, El Paso
District 1

WILLIAM V. McBRIDE, San Antonio
District 5

GERALDINE MILLER, Dallas
District 12

PETE MORALES, JR., Devine
District 3

JOHN MACK PRESCOTT, College Station
District 10

KATHERINE PEARCY RAINES, Cleburne
District 14

JACK STRONG, Longview
District 8

W. N. KIRBY, Commissioner of Education
(Executive Officer of the State Board of Education)

Committees
of the
State Board of Education

Personnel
JOHN MACK PRESCOTT, Chairman
REBECCA CANNING
EMMETT J. CONRAD
CAROLYN HONEA CRAWFORD
PAUL C. DUNN

Finance & Programs
MARIA ELENA A. FLOOD, Chairman
JON BRUMLEY
WILLIAM V. McBRIDE
GERALDINE MILLER
PETE MORALES, JR.

Long-Range Planning
REBECCA CANNING, Chairman
MARY HELEN BERLANGA
EMMETT J. CONRAD
CAROLYN HONEA CRAWFORD
CHARLES W. DUNCAN, JR.
WILLIAM V. McBRIDE

Students
JACK STRONG, Chairman
VOLLY C. BASTINE, JR.
MARY HELEN BERLANGA
CHARLES W. DUNCAN, JR.
KATHERINE PEARCY RAINES

CONTENTS

List of Objectives 1

General Specifications 2

Objectives and Measurement Specifications 3

Objective 1. Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization ... 3

Objective 2. Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation 5

Objective 3. Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words 7

Objective 4. Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage 8

Objective 5. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons 10

Objective 6. Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication 11

Objective 7. Write a composition to describe an object or picture 13

Objective 8. Write a composition to tell how to do something 16

Objective 9. Write a narrative on a specified topic 18

Objective 10. Write a composition in which two or more ideas/objects/places are classified according to specified criteria and described 20

Objective 11. Write a composition in which a choice is made and reasons that would support the choice and convince a specified audience are presented 23

TEXAS EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF MINIMUM SKILLS

GRADE 5 WRITING

List of Objectives

Skill Area: Mechanics

Objective 1. Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

Objective 2. Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

Objective 3. Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

Skill Area: English Usage

Objective 4. Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

Skill Area: Sentence Formation

Objective 5. Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

Skill Area: Proofreading

Objective 6. Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

Skill Area: Organization/Appropriate Response to Purpose and Audience*

Objective 7: Write a composition to describe an object or picture.

Objective 8: Write a composition to tell how to do something.

Objective 9: Write a narrative on a specified topic.

Objective 10: Write a composition in which two or more ideas/objects/places are classified according to specified criteria and described.

Objective 11: Write a composition in which a choice is made and reasons that would convince a specified audience are presented.

* Only one objective in this skill area will be measured each year.

GRADE 5 WRITING

General Specifications

I. Test Items

A. Sentences used in the test will be developed using only those words contained in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5. Proper nouns and words explained in the text are excluded from this requirement.

B. Sentences will be of varying lengths and will not exceed 15 words in length.

C. The content of sentences will be appropriate to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

D. Sentences will represent various ethnic groups of populations in Texas. The three main groups are black, Hispanic, and white.

E. The sentences and items will be free of stereotyping by age, sex, ethnicity, and geographical location.

F. Simple, compound, and complex sentences will be used.

II. Answer Choices

A. For each item, there will be four answer choices with only one correct answer.

B. Neither "none of the above" nor "all of the above" will be used as an answer choice.

C. Except where noted otherwise, all words in the items, including the answer choices, will be taken from the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5. Proper nouns and words explained in the text are excluded from this requirement.

III. Test Package Format

A. The test will be printed in black ink on white paper.

B. Type size will be appropriate for fifth grade students.

C. Test items and their corresponding answer choices will appear on the same page.

D. Graphic displays and their corresponding test items and answer choices will appear on the same or facing pages.

OBJECTIVES AND MEASUREMENT SPECIFICATIONS

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 1

Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

Description of Test Items/Answer Choices

1. Four versions of the same sentence will be presented. Only one version will be capitalized correctly.

2. The correct version will illustrate correct capitalization of one or more of the following:

   a. the first word in a sentence,

   b. the pronoun "I,"

   c. names of persons,

   d. names of the days of the week,

   e. names of cities and states,

   f. names of holidays, or

   g. names of the months of the year.

3. Each incorrect answer choice will illustrate one or more of the following:

   a. not capitalizing the first word in a sentence,

   b. not capitalizing the pronoun "I,"

   c. not capitalizing a person's name,

   d. not capitalizing names of holidays, days of the week, months of the year, or cities and states, or

   e. unnecessary capitalization.

Example of Test Item

Choose the sentence that has the correct capitalization.

A	Every year the baseball season begins in April.	(correct answer)
B	Every year the Baseball season begins in april.	(unnecessary capitalization and month not capitalized)
C	every year the baseball season begins in April.	(first word in sentence not capitalized)
D	every year the baseball season begins in april.	(first word in sentence and month not capitalized)

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 2

Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

Description of Test Items/Answer Choices

1. Four different sentences will be presented. Only one sentence will be punctuated correctly.

2. The correct sentence will illustrate correct usage of one or more of the following:

   a. a period at the end of a declarative or an imperative sentence,

   b. a question mark at the end of an interrogative sentence,

   c. a comma between city and state and between words in a series*, or

   d. an apostrophe in contractions made with "not" or "will."

3. The correct sentence should have no internal punctuation except when it contains contractions, words in a series, or a reference to a city and state.

4. An incorrect sentence will illustrate one of the following:

   a. omitting punctuation at the end of a declarative or an imperative sentence,

   b. substituting a period for a question mark at the end of an interrogative sentence,

   c. omitting a comma between city and state or between words in a series,*

   d. misplacing or not using an apostrophe in contractions made with "not" or "will," or

   e. using unnecessary commas (e.g., placing a comma between the subject and verb of a sentence).

* Students will not be tested on the use of the comma before "and" in a series.

Example of Test Item

Choose the sentence that has the correct punctuation.

A	Laura was born on June 16, 1964.	(correct answer)
B	He likes fried chicken mashed potatoes, and iced tea.	(comma omitted between words in a series)
C	Where are the cold turkey sandwiches	(question mark omitted at the end)
D	Tommy isnt going with us to the movies.	(apostrophe omitted in contrac-tion)

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

Objective 3

Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

Description of Test Items

1. The test item will consist of a sentence with a blank line to represent the word to be tested.

2. The word to be tested will exhibit regular sound-symbol correspondence.

3. The word to be spelled will be selected from the TEA spelling list for Grade 5. Neither contractions nor homonyms will be eligible for testing.

Description of Answer Choices

1. Three incorrectly spelled versions of the missing word will be presented as well as the correctly spelled version of the word.

2. Among the incorrect answers, the most common misspellings of the word to be tested will be presented.

Example of Test Item

Choose the correct spelling of the word that goes in the blank.

The birthday party planned by her friends was a _____ for Gina.

A surprise (correct answer)

B suprize (incorrect answer)

C suprise (incorrect answer)

D surpprise (incorrect answer)

SKILL AREA: ENGLISH USAGE

Objective 4

Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

Description of Test Items/Answer Choices

1. Four versions of a sentence will be presented. Only one version will demonstrate correct English usage.

2. Each version will contain either a simple predicate or a compound predicate.

3. The verb conjugations used will be in the past, present, or future tense (e.g., "have," "had," or "will have") or in the continuous present or past tense (e.g., "is running," or "was running").

4. Each answer choice will contain no more than one usage error.

5. The correct answer will illustrate one or more of the following:

   a. correct subject-verb agreement among items containing neither compound elements nor phrases placed between the subject and verb of the sentence,

   b. correct form (conjugation and tense) of all regular verbs, common irregular verbs, and the verb "to be,"

   c. correct comparative forms of adjectives,

   d. correct word choice,

   e. avoidance of double negatives (The use of "scarcely" and "hardly" will not be tested.), or

   f. correct forms of "a" and "an."

6. An incorrect answer choice will illustrate one of the following:

   a. lack of subject-verb agreement,

      (1) A verb and its subject do not agree in person (e.g., "The men is tired today.").

      (2) A verb and its subject do not agree in number (e.g., "He don't like the seashore.").

b. incorrect form,

(1) An irregular verb is conjugated as if it were regular (e.g., "Last week they leaved me some books to read.").

(2) The verb form "be" is used as a linking or helping verb (e.g., "At dinner time he be very hungry.").

(3) A form of the verb "be" is omitted as a linking or helping verb (e.g., "We going to school tomorrow.").

(4) A verb contradicts the time sense of the sentence (e.g., "Yesterday I write a letter.").

(5) Past tense is formed by incorrectly including "done" (e.g., They done left me some books to read.").

c. incorrect comparative forms of adjectives,

(1) The comparative form involves a double comparison (e.g., "He is more happier than John.").

(2) A multi-syllable adjective comparative form is made by adding "er" (e.g., "That watch is expensiver than mine.").

(3) A superlative form is used instead of a comparative form (e.g., "My horse is fastest than yours.").

d. incorrect word choice (e.g., The teacher learned me how to spell."),

e. use of double negatives (e.g., "I didn't do nothing wrong."), or

f. incorrect use of "a" and "an."

Example of Test Item

Choose the sentence that is written correctly.

A	Last week they left me some books to read.	(correct answer)
B	Last week they leave me some books to read.	(time sense contradicted)
C	Last week they leaved me some books to read.	(irregular verb conjugated as if regular)
D	Last week they done left me some books to read.	(past tense formed by including "done")

SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

Objective 5

Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments and/or run-ons.

Description of Test Items/Answer Choices

1. Four groups of words will be presented. Each group will begin with a capital letter and end with a period. One group will be a complete, simple sentence. The other three groups will be fragments or run-on sentences.

2. The correct answer will be the complete simple sentence. This sentence will follow normal sentence order (subject-verb-complement or subject-verb-modifier).

3. Each incorrect answer will be one of the following types of incomplete sentences or run-ons:

   a. a word group with a subject but no predicate,

   b. a word group with a predicate but no subject,

   c. a prepositional phrase,

   d. two short, independent clauses with no period or no conjunction between the two, or

   e. a participial phrase.

Example of Test Item

Find the one choice that is a complete sentence.

A	The boat almost tipped over.	(correct answer)
B	The boat on shining blue waters.	(subject with no predicate)
C	Has sailed across the lake.	(predicate with no subject)
D	All the way to the opposite shore.	(prepositional phrase)

SKILL AREA: PROOFREADING

Objective 6

Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written statement.

Description of Test Items/Answer Choices

1. The question will consist of four lines of text. After the first sentence, no more than one sentence will begin on a new line.

2. The four lines of text will comprise a story or a description.

3. Each line of text will not exceed 15 words in length.

4. Four parts of each line of text will be underlined. One of the four parts will contain an error in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Only the errors defined in Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4 are eligible for testing. The other three underlined parts will contain no mistakes.

5. An underlined part will include one or more words and/or numbers.

6. Underlined parts occurring at the end of a sentence will extend beyond the end punctuation.

7. Underlined parts occurring in sentences may extend beyond the word to indicate that the punctuation mark or lack of punctuation will be considered.

8. Whenever a date is tested, the entire date will be underlined.

9. Whenever a city and state are tested together, the entire group of words will be underlined.

Examples of Test Item

Read the passage below. In each line, there is a mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or in the way a word is used. Find the underlined part of each line that has the mistake. Mark that letter on your answer folder.

Do (A) you have (B) any friends who been (C) to Austin, Texas (D)? Many

people travel (E) to see the butiful (F) city. (G) They often (H)

goes (A) to Lake Travis (B) for their vacations. (C) On a summer (D)

day the lake (E) is filled, (F) with swimmers (G) and sailboats. (H)

SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION/APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Objective 7

Write a composition to describe an object or picture.

Description of Test Items

1. The item stimulus will elicit a composition which has an informative purpose and is written in the descriptive mode.

2. The item stimulus will ask the student to describe an object or what he or she sees in a picture that is given. The specified audience will be the teacher, a classmate, or "someone else." Verbal cues that focus the student's attention on the object or picture will be given in the stimulus.

3. If a picture is given, it will consist of either a scene or a single object familiar to fifth graders. The picture will be fanciful or realistic and must be relatively simple. Visual cues will be present that focus the student's attention on the task. No extraneous details will be included in the picture.

4. If an object to be described is not pictured, the object must be familiar to all fifth grade students so that they can write about it.

5. The vocabulary needed to describe the picture or object that is given will not exceed that required of fifth graders, as defined by the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5.

6. The item stimulus must appeal to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

Description of Successful Responses

The composition will have an informative purpose, be written in a descriptive mode, and be presented in a manner appropriate to the specified audience. The level of expectation for student performance will be appropriate for fifth grade students.

1. The description should be specific and elaborated. The writer should describe a lengthy set of features elaborated through the use of figurative language and/or rich detail.

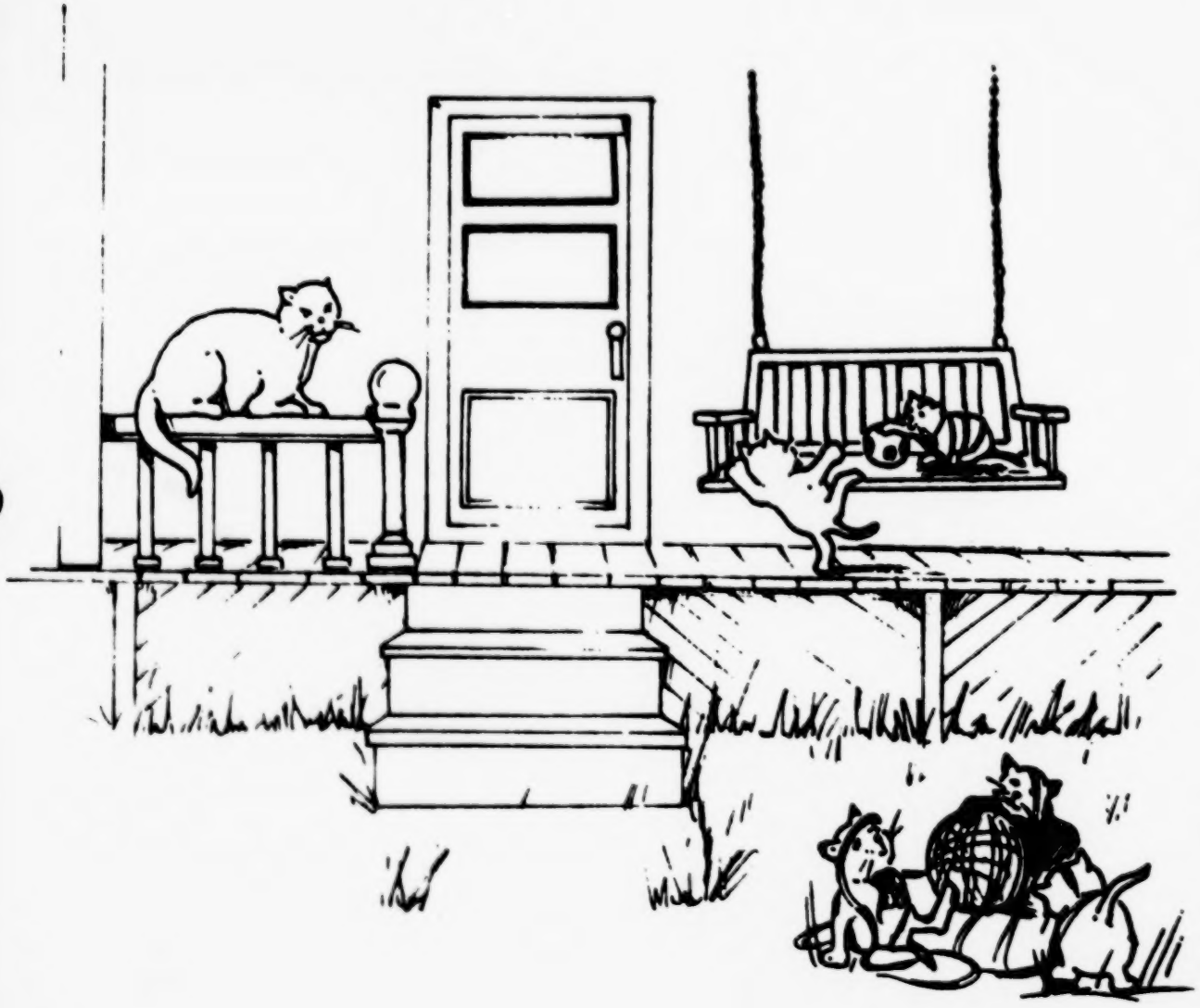
2. The description should paint a vivid picture of the object or scene in the mind of the reader by using picturesque words and/or sophisticated sentence constructions.

3. The response should be consistent in its organizational strategy. Usually the writer will select one feature and describe it fully before moving on to another feature. Frequently, the writer will include the locations of features described and delineate the relationship of one feature to another.

4. The response should remain on topic from beginning to end and should not digress into an expressive/narrative piece. The writer may frame the description with narration or interject expressive elements, but these enhance the description rather than detract from it.

Example of Test Item

Kittens can be fun to watch. Look at this picture and describe what you see for someone else to read.



SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION/APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Objective 8

Write a composition to tell how to do something.

Description of Test Items

1. The item stimulus will elicit a composition that has an informative purpose and is written in the narrative mode.

2. The item stimulus will ask the student to tell how to do something. The specified audience will be the teacher, a classmate, or "someone else." Verbal cues that focus the student's attention on the task will be given in the question.

3. The item will include a pictorial stimulus, or it will specify a process that is to be explained.

4. If a pictorial stimulus is given, it will consist of a scene, a single object, or a series of pictures familiar to fifth graders. The stimulus will be relatively simple in nature; no extraneous details will be included. Visual cues will be given in the picture to focus the student's attention on the task.

5. If a specified process is to be explained, the process must be familiar to all fifth graders so that they will be able to write about it.

6. The vocabulary needed to describe the picture or process that is specified will not exceed that required of fifth grade students, as defined by the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5.

7. The item stimulus will appeal to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

Description of Successful Responses

The composition will have an informative purpose and be written in the narrative mode. The level of expectation for student performance will be appropriate for fifth grade students.

1. The composition should delineate the steps needed to complete the specified task and should sequentially order these steps.

2. Each step presented should be unambiguous, specific, and elaborated so that the step could be replicated by another individual.

3. The response should be consistent in its organizational strategy. A logical sequence of steps will be presented. Usually the writer will describe each step fully before moving on to another step.

Example of Test Item

Explain to your classmates how to make your favorite sandwich. Tell what you would do first. Then tell what other things you would do.

SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION/APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Objective 9

Write a narrative on a specified topic.

Description of Test Items

1. The item stimulus will elicit a composition that has an expressive purpose and is written in the narrative mode.

2. The item stimulus will ask the student to write a story. The specified audience will be the teacher, or a classmate, or "someone else." Verbal cues that focus the student's attention on the task will be given in the stimulus.

3. The item will include a picture, or it will simply specify a story scenario.

4. If a pictorial stimulus is given, it will consist of a scene or a single object, and it will be fanciful or realistic. It must be relatively simple; no extraneous details will be included. The item stimulus will have visual cues that focus the student's attention on the task.

5. If a story scenario is presented, it must be familiar to all fifth graders so that they will be able to respond to the task.

6. The vocabulary needed to write the story will not exceed that required of fifth graders, as defined by the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5.

7. The item stimulus will appeal to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

Description of Successful Responses

The composition will have an expressive purpose, be written in the narrative mode, and be presented in a manner appropriate to the specified audience. The level of expectation for student performance will be appropriate for fifth grade students. The response should include a series of events sequenced in logical narrative progression.

1. The story should follow the narrative progression from beginning to end. The writer will not make abrupt, confusing shifts in time or location. When shifts in time or location occur, the writer handles these in a clear effective manner.

2. The narrative should have a clear sense of beginning and ending. The writer will not stop writing abruptly but will bring closure to the writing by resolving the action.

3. The response should include rich details and a varied choice of words. Description will be vivid and extensive and will help the reader to visualize the events of the story. The details should embellish the unfolding events.

Example of Test Item

Pretend that a puppy followed you home from school one day. Write a story for your classmates about your adventures that day.

SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION/APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Objective 10

Write a composition in which two or more ideas/objects/places are classifed according to specified criteria and described.

Description of Test Items

1. The item stimulus will elicit a composition that has an informative purpose and is written in the classificatory mode.

2. The item stimulus will ask the student to classify two or more ideas/objects/places. Verbal cues that focus the student's attention on the task will be given in the stimulus. The specified audience will be the teacher, a classmate, or "someone else."

3. The item will include a pictorial stimulus, or it will simply specify the ideas/objects/places to be discussed.

4. If a pictorial stimulus is given, it will consist of a series of pictures that are familiar to f fth graders and are relatively simple in nature. No extraneous details will be included in the stimulus. Visual cues that focus the student's attention on the task will be given.

5. If ideas/objects/places are described in the item stimulus, they will be familiar to all fifth grade students so that they can write about them.

6. The vocabulary needed to write the composition will not exceed that required of fifth grade students, as defined by the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5.

7. The item stimulus will appeal to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

Description of Successful Responses

The response will have an informative purpose and be written in the classificatory mode. The level of expectation for student performance will be appropriate for fifth grade students.

1. In the composition the specified ideas/objects/places should be classified in a logical way in response to the specified audience.

2. Information presented about the specified ideas/objects/places should be specific and elaborated.

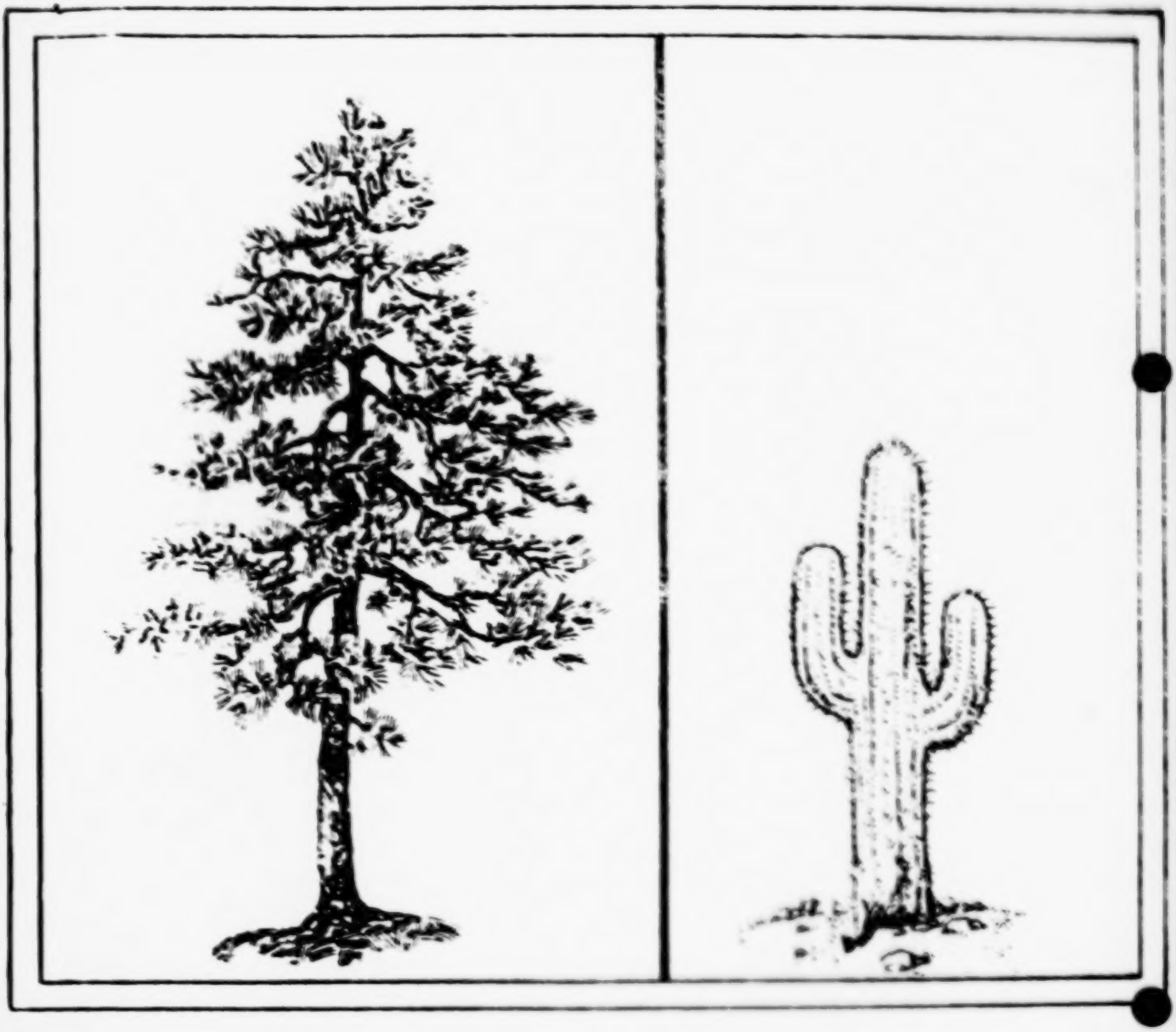
3. The response should be consistent in its organizational strategy. Relationships between the ideas delineated should be clear.

4. The response should remain on topic from beginning to end. When personal anecdotes or other rhetorical devices are used, they will enhance the response.

Example of Test Item

Look at the pine tree and cactus shown below. Think about them. In what ways are they alike? In what ways are they different?

Write a report for your class about how a pine tree and a cactus are alike and how they are different.



SKILL AREA: ORGANIZATION/APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO PURPOSE AND AUDIENCE

Objective 11

Write a composition in which a choice is made and reasons that would support the choice and convince a specified audience are presented.

Description of Test Items

1. The item stimulus will ask the student to make a choice and present convincing reasons for the choice to a specified audience. The specified audience will be the teacher, the principal, a classmate, or "someone else." Verbal cues will be given in the item to focus the student's attention on the task.

2. The item stimulus will elicit a composition that has a persuasive purpose and is written in a descriptive mode.

3. The item will include a pictorial stimulus, or it will simply specify options among which a choice must be made.

4. If a pictorial stimulus is given, it will consist of either a scene or a single object familiar to fifth graders. The picture will be relatively simple; no extraneous details will be included. Visual cues will be presented to focus the student's attention on the task.

5. If the options among which a choice must be made are described in the item stimulus, the options must be familiar to all fifth graders so that they can write about them.

6. The vocabulary needed to write the composition will not exceed that required of fifth grade students, as defined by the TEA cumulative vocabulary list through Grade 5.

7. The item stimulus will appeal to the interests and experiences of fifth grade students.

Description of Successful Responses

The response will have a persuasive purpose and be written in the descriptive mode. The level of expectation for student performance will be appropriate for fifth grade students. In the composition, the student will make a choice among the options presented and will provide reasons for the choice that are presented in a logical, unified way and are convincing to a specified audience.

1. The response should contain sufficient elaboration of reasons to make them understood clearly and to be convincing in support of the writer's stated choice.

2. The response should contain a clear sense of order and completeness as evidenced by effective use of transitional, introductory, and concluding elements.

3. The response should contain highly effective word choice, such as striking words, phrases, or expressions of thought.

4. The response should be characterized by an overall fluency in the expression of ideas.

Example of Test Item

Your class has earned money to buy something for your classroom. The choices are an aquarium, a computer, sports equipment, or art supplies. Choose one of these. Write a letter to your teacher and give reasons for your choice.

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE VI, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; THE MODIFIED COURT ORDER, CIVIL ACTION 5281, FEDERAL DISTRICT COURT, EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS, TYLER DIVISION

Reviews of local education agencies pertaining to compliance with Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 and with specific requirements of the Modified Court Order, Civil Action No. 5281, Federal District Court, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division are conducted periodically by staff representatives of the Texas Education Agency. These reviews cover at least the following policies and practices:

(1) acceptance policies on student transfers from other school districts;

(2) operation of school bus routes or runs on a non-segregated basis;

(3) nondiscrimination in extracurricular activities and the use of school facilities;

(4) nondiscriminatory practices in the hiring, assigning, promoting, paying, demoting, reassigning, or dismissing of faculty and staff members who work with children;

(5) enrollment and assignment of students without discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;

(6) nondiscriminatory practices relating to the use of a student's first language; and

(7) evidence of published procedures for hearing complaints and grievances.

In addition to conducting reviews, the Texas Education Agency staff representatives check complaints of discrimination made by a citizen or citizens residing in a school district where it is alleged discriminatory practices have occurred or are occurring.

Where a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act is found, the findings are reported to the Office for Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

If there is a direct violation of the Court Order in Civil Action No. 5281 that cannot be cleared through negotiation, the sanctions required by the Court Order are applied.

TITLE VII, CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964; EXECUTIVE ORDERS 11246 AND 11375; TITLE IX, 1973 EDUCATION AMENDMENTS; REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AS AMENDED; 1974 AMENDMENTS TO THE WAGE-HOUR LAW EXPANDING THE AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ACT OF 1967; AND VIETNAM ERA VETERANS READJUSTMENT ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1972 AS AMENDED IN 1974.

It is the policy of the Texas Education Agency to comply fully with the nondiscrimination provisions of all federal and state laws and regulations by assuring that no person shall be excluded from consideration for recruitment, selection, appointment, training, promotion, retention, or any other personnel action, or be denied any benefits or participation in any programs or activities which it operates on the grounds of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, handicap, age, or veteran status (except where age, sex, or handicap constitute a bona fide occupational qualification necessary to proper and efficient administration). The Texas Education Agency makes positive efforts to employ and advance in employment all protected groups.

Texas Education Agency
Austin, Texas
GE6 725 06